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Сэржээ, Бэсүд Жамбалдоржийн, *Орчин цагийн монгол хэлний ономсон нэрийн судалгаа* (The Study of the Onomastics of Contemporary Mongolian Language). МУИС, Монгол хэл соёлын сургууль, Улаанбаатар 2010, 315 pp.; Price not specified; ISBN 978-99962-3-020-2 – Reviewed by Eva Obrátilová
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Elisabetha Chiodo, *The Mongolian Manuscripts on Birch Bark from Xarbuxyn Balgas in the Collection of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences.* Part 1–2. Asiatische Forschungen. Monographienreihe zur Geschichte, Kultur und Sprache der Völker Ost- und Zentralasiens. Band 137, 1–2. Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2009. Part 1: X+305 pp. + Facsimiles; Part 2: VIII+338 pp. + Facsimiles. Hardback, price not specified; ISBN 3-447-04246-X, ISSN 0571-320X – Reviewed by Ondřej Srba
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On the Chinese transcription, Ming Glossary and on translations of the Secret History of the Mongols into European languages

J. Lubsangdorji, Charles University in Prague

Summary: In the study of the SHM there is a conception of the language of the original of the SHM, to which its Chinese interlinear translation and the Chinese abridged translation belong. In this paper this conception is questioned, and it is demonstrated from concrete examples that it results in erroneous translations. We may mention several examples: Temüjin seized a mare from the Merkit ruler and presented it to his brotherly friend Jamuqa (§117); an important riding horse of Chingis Khan's commander Boorči had an arched back (§95); Mongolian Khans killed people by cooking them all in a kettle (§129); and the like. The author of the paper discloses and corrects a number of such errors and proposes new possibilities for translations, which should correctly reflect the facts described in the SHM.

1. Introduction

After the decline of Mongolian domination a great need arose for the Ming official representatives (officials) to learn the Mongolian language. The Emperor ordered the Cabinet of Wise Men in Literature to prepare and issue teaching materials for the Mongolian language (textbooks, readers, dictionaries). One of them was the SHM, which was called *Yüan-ch'ao pi-shih* (The Secret History of the Yüan Dynasty) and became a widespread teaching aid of the Mongolian language for many Chinese. According to the research of the American scholar F.W. Cleaves (1982, p. LX), in the beginning the arrangement of the 'columns' in this book was as follows:

1) Mongolian original in the Uighur-Mongolian script
2) interlinear Chinese transcription of the Mongolian pronunciation of every word
3) interlinear Chinese translation after every word
4) after every paragraph abridged translation into Chinese

At a later stage the Uighur-Mongolian text was removed and only the last three parts were printed between 1368 and 1382. This copy is the so-called Chinese original of the SHM, and translators and scholars call it the "language of the

original".[1] What is the opinion of specialists in Mongolian studies, who made significant contributions to the study of the SHM?

It may be interesting to note the opinions of various scholars on the individual component parts of the text as mentioned above.

On the Chinese transcription:

- "The Chinese transcription of the SHM has an unbelievably detailed system, the SHM is not a transcription of an oral original or oral reading of a person, but it is transcribed from the written original, it reflects and transmits the orthography of the pre-classical period." (Sumyabaatar 1990, pp. 893–894)
- "The Chinese transcription of the SHM is not made on the basis of the original written Uighur-Mongolian original, but it is transcribed on the basis of the pronunciation of Mongolian of the second half of the 14th Cent."[2]
- "The Mongolian text (*Niuca Tobca'an*) is not only the oldest Mongolian historical source, but also the oldest Mongolian literary document. Thus besides its contents it has special linguistic value. In addition – regardless of what is said below in the preliminary remark to Part VII – it is a unique work of transcription of a complete literary work from a foreign language into Chinese characters, and that is why it is of importance for the technique of transcription as well as for historical phonology."[3]

1) Cf. the title page of the English translation by F.W. Cleaves (1982): *Done into English out of the Original Tongue.*

2) Гадамба (1990, p. 218). Besides that, Gaadamba repeatedly seriously criticized the erroneous transcriptions in the Chinese transcription, which result in incorrect meanings. For example : "non-serious erroneous transcriptions" (p. 247, com. No. 155); "more serious errors of the scribes making the transcription" (p. 276, com. No. 288); "erroneous transcription" (p. 324, com. No. 461); "result of an erroneous pronunciation also in writing what was read aloud" (p. 253, com. No. 181); "errors of incorrect pronunciation and incorrect listening" (p. 254, com. No. 185); "erroneous transcription according to erroneous pronunciation" (p. 256, com. No. 196); "errors of the writing scribes" (p. 260, com. No. 213); "many errors, arising due to the inclination to interchange the male and female vowels at random, and in that way change many male words into female words" (p. 249, com. No. 165; p. 264, com. No. 232, 234; p. 265, com. No. 237); etc.

3) Haenisch (1931, p. 5): 'Der mongolische Text stellt nicht nur die älteste mongolische Geschichtsquelle dar, sondern auch das älteste mongolische Literaturewerk überhaupt, besitzt also neben seinem inhaltlichen auch einen besonderen sprachlichen Wert. Er ist zudem – unbeschadet dessen, was unten in der Vorbemerkung zu Teil VII gesagt wird – ein Unikum als Umschreibung eines vollständigen fremdsprachlichen Literaturwerkes mit chinesischen Zeichen, daher von Wichtigkeit für die Umschreibungstechnik wie für die Lautgeschichte.'

- "The below reconstruction of the text, which could not use other manuscripts, should be viewed as an experiment. .... The phonetic section offers only the material and leaves the rest to a specialist."[4]

On the Ming interlinear translation:

- "The interlinear Chinese translation has an invaluable importance for a correct understanding of every word and for understanding the SHM. This is because the authors of theses interlinear translations mastered completely both the Mongolian and the Chinese language of that time, and besides that it must be taken into consideration that the translation of the SHM was made at a time, when only 100–150 years had passed since its composition." (Čeringsodnam 1993, p. 19)
- "Unfortunately, this Glossary often mentions only one particular meaning for every word, sometimes not corresponding to the particular context." (Kozin 1941, p. 12)
- "There is an opinion that the author of the interlinear Chinese translation could have been a speaker of a Turkic language. In fact he explained the words from the Mongolian language and many common Mongolian-Turkic words in agreement with the meaning in Turkic languages. That is why we support the Inner-Mongolian respected Professor Bayar, who is of the opinion that the translator and transcriber of the SHM was a person from 'the Balga town of the Wester Country, called Cagan'. It seems that this idea is substantiated and correct." (Gaadamba 1990, p. 261, com. No. 218)

On the abridged Chinese translation:

- "The Chinese abridged version was created before the interlinear translations." (Mostaert 2010, p. 74, com. No. 90)[5]
- "The Chinese abridged translation is based on a different source of the Mongolian original than the one which was used for the transcription (from which the transcription was made)..." (Mostaert 2010, p. xviii)
- "...this translation is one of the significant means of control for ensuring a correct translation of the SHM." (Mostaert 2010, p. xviii)

4) Haenisch (1931, p. 5): 'Die hierunter gelieferte Textwiederherstellung, die nicht mit anderen Handschriften arbeiten konnte, will als ein Versuch betrachtet werden. ... Der phonetische Teil bietet nur Stoff und überläßt das Weitere dem Fachmann.'

5) This and the following quotations from Mostaert are translated from the Mongolian translation of his work (2010).

- "But the Chinese translation, as is now confirmed, represents a very abridged translation of the Mongolian original and besides that it is occasionally incorrect." (N. Poppe, in the Preface to Kozin's translation. In: Kozin 1941, p. 5)
- "The (translation) text ... was not prepared on the basis of the SHM, but it is obviously created on the basis of the J. In any case, it depends directly on the interlinear translation. This is indicated by the fact that where there are missing words in the former, there are also corresponding gaps in the translation text."[6]

Two books are interesting in the history of the translations of the SHM: the first of them very much attracted the attention of Europeans. It is called "The Ancient Mongolian Narration about Chingis Khan" (*Старинное монгольское сказание о Чингисхане*) and was first published in 1866. It is a translation from Chinese into Russian by the Russian missionary Palladij Kaparov. The other one is the Mongolian translation of Cend-Gun *Yüan ulus-un niγuča teüke* (Secret History of the Yüan Empire, 1917). This translation was criticized by C. Damdinsüreng (1990, p. 14) on the grounds that it is "very short, in the SHM there are several hundreds of poems, but in this translation there is not even one, some of them are rendered into prose, but most of the poems were left out." But in both cases it was an abridged Chinese translation.

2. Translations into European languages

Two scholars from Western Europe, French academician P. Pelliot and German professor E. Haenisch were engaged in a very important and complicated work – the transcription of the SHM, this remarkable creation, from the Chinese characters into the Latin script and the edition of a complete translation of the Mongolian original. Paul Pelliot managed to make a complete transcription and a French translation of the first six chapters, which was published only after his death. Erich Haenisch converted the Mongolian original into the Latin script, which is called the "Chinese original of the SHM" (Haenisch 1935), translated into German the Chinese interlinear

6) Haenisch (1931, p. 58): '(Der Übersetzungstext).....Er scheint aber nicht unmittelbar nach dem N.T., sondern nach J. hergestellt zu sein, zum mindesten unter ihrer Benutzung. Jedenfalls ist er vom J. abhängig. Darauf deutet einmal der Umstand, daß dort, wo bei ersterer einzelne Wörter fehlen, sich aber im Übersetzungstext entsprechende Lücken finden.'

Glossary (Haenisch 1962) and subsequently translated into German the whole of the SHM (Haenisch 1948). All this was published as three separate books.

This great work was followed by translations of the SHM: a Russian translation by Academician S.A. Kozin (1941), an artistic translation into modern Mongolian by scholar and writer Damdinsüreng (1947) and a Czech translation by Pavel Poucha (1955). These older translations are still considered to be important.

In the course of the last fifty years, research into the SHM has expanded considerably. It was translated into all cultural languages (into some even 4–5 times), and a special trend appeared in international Mongolian studies – *research into the SHM*. From among the translations from this period the following ones are renowned: the English translation by F.W. Cleaves (1982) on account of its carefulness and thoroughness, the English translation by I. Rachewiltz (2006)[7] on account of the very great extent of the literary research sources used, the French translation by M.-D. Even and R. Pop (1994)[8] on account of the translations of proper names.[9]

Many translations into European languages keep improving – there is no doubt about that. But they keep repeating the same errors originating from one source. The number of errors in the translations amounts to a few hundred and the same errors can be seen in all the European translations. There is a question of why this is so – the answer is simple and clear. The translations into European languages are based on the Ming Glossary, i.e. the interlinear translation. All the Mongolian words of the original were translated on the basis of the Chinese gloss. I call it here the Ming interlinear translation (*мин хадмал*). We can ask why translators do not keep to the Mongolian original, and why they translate only the Ming interlinear translation. I think it can be explained by the following facts.

2.1. There is an erroneous conception of approaching the Ming interlinear translation and the abridged Chinese translation as if it was the language of

7) Extensive work in two volumes, 1349 + 60 pages, translation, research and commentary.

8) Translation, research and commentary, 349 pp. It is possible to find examples of translations not from the Chinese interlinear translation, but from the Mongolian original.

9) In this paper we will refer only to some of the translations, but the reader may consult a number of other translations, which were not discussed here and which could be discussed in future, e.g. Ligeti 1962 (Hungarian translation), Kałuzyński 1970 (Polish translation), Taube 1989 (German Translation), Fedotov 1991 (Bulgarian translation), or Ramirez Bellerín 2000 (Spanish translation) and some others (e.g. an Italian translation of Kozin's Russian version; Olsufieva 1973 plus several reprints).

the original ('Original Tongue') of the SHM. This opinion has persisted since the time of the discoverer of the SHM, Palladij Kafarov. After publishing the abridged Chinese translation into Russian, he made a courageous step – he transliterated the Mongolian original from the Chinese characters without knowing Mongolian himself, but he did not publish it. Obviously he believed he would be able to do everything on the basis of his knowledge of Chinese.

The Ming translators attached only one meaning to every Mongolian word. In some cases they made the correct choice, but in many cases they missed the meaning. It means that their chosen meaning did not fit the particular context. Often it appeared as if it was purposefully incorrect. For example: the word *jildü* (§13) – 'head together with the heart' (when cutting up the body of the animal) was given the meaning *half of the chest*; the phrase *qabar qaqas* (§280) – 'exact half (of anything)', was given the meaning *half of the nose;* furthermore the word *si'aljaqui* (§116), Khalkha *мөсөн шагай шагалцах* – 'to target with the puck' (a game on ice like ice hockey) – was translated as 'playing with bone stones' ('Knochensteinen'; Haenisch 1962, p. 138); the word *bögötür* – withers (of a horse) (§95), translated as the 'horse with an (upwards) hunched back' ('mit [nach oben] krummen Rücken'; Haenisch 1962, p. 16); the word *erüge* (§105) – 'the cover of the roof window of the yurt', metaphorically 'from clear heaven, all of a sudden', was given the meaning 'hole in the roof, window' ('Deckenluke'; Haenisch 1962, p. 46); and the like. Sometimes the Ming translators did not mind the contextual meaning, they simply attached one of the meanings, which was sufficient for their work, they did not care about the polysemia of words, about the shifted and figurative meanings, they were stumbling between homonyms and homophones.

The Chinese abridged translation is far too short and it repeated the incorrectness of the interlinear translation. Or is it correct to accept as an original such an insufficient work presented by the Ming translators, and to consider it to be an important historical and literary document?

2.2. The Mongolian original of the SHM was written in the year 1228 (the first ten chapters) and in the year 1240 (the last two chapters). Its language was very archaic, it had been passed on at least for five hundred years, and specialists in Mongolian call it the 'oral written' language. In a great majority of cases it had a number of forgotten or obsolete words and terms difficult to understand. And in the Chinese sign transcription many of these words were read incorrectly and transliterated in a deformed manner. But all of them were provided with a Chinese gloss by the Ming translators. And since the Glossary words were taken from spoken Chinese, they were comprehensible

and simple, which was also the intention of the foreign translators.[10] The Ming interlinear translation is often correct, but also often incorrect. Why did such a number of mistakes and inaccuracies appear in the Ming interlinear translation? The answer requires a complex approach to the study of this phenomenon.

2.2.1. It is necessary to look for the main problem in the Mongolian writing system of the original. The original of the SHM was written in the Uighur-Mongolian script, which was polyphonic. Two different phonemes, for example *-q/γ, d/t, j/y, o/u, ö/ü* were written only using one sign. And in some cases even such different phonemes as *a/e* or *s/č* were also writtem using one grapheme. And we must also note that there was no special marking of proper names (for example by 'capitals') and in the original of the SHM no diacritics were used. Besides that the Mongolian manuscript was written by a 'bamboo pen', and thus in the course of time at many places the letters were no longer easy to decipher and could be incorrectly read and consequently erroneously transliterated in further copies. The manuscript must have been damaged in the course of the years, which only increased the number of illegible passages and also necessarily affected the subsequent transcriptions, including those into Chinese signs. That explains why both in the Chinese transcription and in the Chinese interlinear Glossary so many mistakes could arise.

2.2.2. Besides problems with orthography, there are obviously also many errors arising in connection with pronunciation. It also follows from the criticism of Bayar and Gaadamba (cf. Гадамба 1990, p. 261, com. No. 218) that the style of pronunciation is Turkic: "the meanings of a great number of words are in fact clarified on the basis of Turkic languages". For example, in the Uighur-Mongolian script there was the word *yakin* (yak), which is used in the Chinese transcription in the form *yekin*, while there was no such word in Mongolian. Then the word *inaru* (before some time, until) transcribed as *inerü* (§70, this word did not exist in Mongolian either), to which was attached a completely inappropriate interlinear gloss: 'to prepare food, to offer an offering'. In this manner an ordinary and comprehensible word *inaru* turned into an incomprehensible word *inerü,* and scholars found themselves

10) For example, Mostaert (2010, p. 179) squarely wrote about the Mongolian word *abid*: "the Chinese interlinear translation offers the meaning 'entrails', which is correct and confirmed and easily comprehensible."

in a difficult position and considered this word to be a special ritual term and provided it with many pages of commentaries.

As a consequence of the historical influence of Turkic languages, in some modern Mongolian dialects, e.g. in the Bayat dialect, the Mongolian word *Idam* (human name) as it is written in the classical script, is pronounced *Idem* (in Bayat), while in Khalkha it is pronounced *Yadam*. Or the word *декан* borrowed from Russian is pronounced *декáн* in Khalkha, *декéн* in Bayat. It is obvious that among those who made the transcription was somebody belonging to such dialects.

Let us quote E. Haenisch (1931, p. 5), who wrote about the text of the Mongolian original of the SHM: "We would expect that for someone knowing both languages, reconstructing the Mongolian original on the basis of the interlinear version and the Chinese translation, though abridged, would present little difficulty. This is also exactly what Brettschneider said. I cannot support this opinion. Though the text is mostly easy, in many passages there are still considerable difficulties, because they are partly written in the form of the old language, which can be verified neither in grammars nor in dictionaries. On the other hand some mistakes and omissions come from copyists not knowing the language."[11]

The aim of the preserved "original" of the SHM (i.e. transcription of Mongolian into Chinese characters and interlinear glosses in Chinese) was to prepare a handbook for teaching colloquial Mongolian to be used by Chinese officials of the Ming Empire. Since for China under the Ming dynasty Mongolian was very important, the Emperor issued an order to establish a special committee, which would create this handbook and transliterate every word of the text from Mongolian according to the pronunciation of the then living colloquial language of the 14th century. The committee was expected to provide a literal Chinese translation of every word. That translation, however, did not correspond to the actually used Mongolian and very often it only mechanically reflected the basic "dictionary" meanings of the words, not their actual metaphorical meanings, which they had in the particular context in a very idiomatic Mongolian language.

11) "Man sollte meinen, daß mit Hilfe der Interlinearversion und der, wenn auch gekürzten, Übersetzung die Wiederherstellung des Originals einem Kenner beider Sprachen wenig Schwierigkeiten böte. So hat sich auch wörtlich Brettschneider geäußert. Ich kann dieses Urteil nicht unterschreiben. Während der Text i. A. leicht läuft, finden sich doch an manchen Stellen ganz beträchtliche Schwierigkeiten, die teils in der altertümlichen, durch Grammatiken und Wörterbücher nicht erfaßbaren Form liegen, teils in den unter der Hand sprachunkundiger Kopisten entstandenen Schreibfehlern und Lücken."

2.2.3. In a language, which is first of all a means of communication, one word usually has many meanings; in various phrases individual expressions can obtain further figurative meanings; to increase the emotional effect there are many figures used in speech – idioms, special phrases, special syntactical structures or modal patterns, whose meaning is often rather remote from the original lexical meaning of the word, as in the case of words used in various figures of speech (metaphors, metonymy, synecdoche and the like). And since the SHM is a literary piece of art, it is replete with similar forms of expression. In fact these are the main characteristic features of the so-called 'oral written' language of the nomads. Unfortunately, most of these rather expressive means remained undiscovered by the Ming interlinear literal translation.

One example: the Mongolian expression *qabar qaqas aldaltan* (lit., 'nose half criminals', §280) has a metaphorical meaning "you will share the punishment for the transgression half and half (i.e. fifty-fifty),"[12] if there are two persons involved. The metaphorical meaning of the Mongolian word *qabar* (nose) is "half", "equal share", because the nose divides the face into two equal parts. Here this image is therefore used as an artistic device. For example: *qabar čayarsun* (lit., 'nose paper') means 'a double sheet in the copybook'; *qabar qasiyan* (lit., 'nose enclosure') means 'the neighbouring enclosure beyond a common wall'; *qabar dabayan* (lit., 'nose mountain pass') means 'a way without trees leading towards a mountain pass and dividing forested mountains'. However, the Ming gloss mentions the words *qabar* as 'nose',[13] *qaqas* as 'apart, separate',[14] *aldaltan* as '(property) punishment'[15] and *qabar qaqas aldaltan* as 'they have implemented the punishment: cut away the nose'.[16] Generally the Chinese translation, or rather interpretation was: 'They were punished with a fine – by cutting half of their noses'. In the translations into European languages we can find a similar interpretation.

Russian translation: *тот поплатится половиною носа* (Kozin 1941, p. 198)
German translation: *... they should be punished by a fine on their property like for cutting a nose...*[17]

12) Ogodej Khan founded a post route and, when appointing two nojons Aračan and Toqučar as the chiefs, he issued this order to them.
13) Haenisch (1962, p. 54): 'Nase'.
14) Haenisch (1962, p. 56): 'auseinander, getrennt'.
15) Haenisch (1962, p. 4): '(Vermögens-) Strafe'.
16) Haenisch (1962, p. 4): 'sie haben die Strafe verwirkt: Nase abgeschnitten'.
17) Haenisch (1948, p. 147): 'sollen sie mit einer Vermögenstrafe belegt werden, wie für Abschlagen der Nase'.

Czech translation: *..., let them be punished by a fine on their property like for cutting a nose!*[18]
English translations: *Let them be condemned to [what is called] 'cleavage [folloving and straight line passing along] the nose'.* (Cleaves 1982, p. 227)
He shall be guilty and liable to "splitting in half along the nose." (Rachewiltz 2006, p. 217)
I will split the thief down the line of his nose and prove him guilty. (Onon 1993, p. 166)

And there are hundred of examples of such nonsensical translations. In this case the French translation avoided this mistake by following the shortened Chinese translation, however, it was not exactly correct either.

French translation: *Qu'on confisque la moitié de ses biens!* (Even, Pop 1994, p. 247)

I do not mean to depreciate the European translations with this example. My criticism only points to the fact that these are not translations of the Mongolian original, but of the Ming interlinear Glossary.

2.2.4. Besides the language deficiencies of Ming translators, it is also necessary to point out their insufficient knowledge of the nomadic culture as such. Two of the transcribers and translators into Chinese are known; they were delegated to the Emperor's committee from the Cabinet of Wise Men in Literature of the Ming dynasty, and they were reported to be "excellent specialists in their national script as well as in the Chinese language and literature, and were Mongols born on the Chinese territory" (Čeringsodnam 1990, p. 18). Their names were *Chau-yuan-ge* and *Ma-ša-yike,* and so it is probably precisely to these two Mongols that we owe all the important high as well as low quality parts of the Ming edition of the SHM.

The glosses on most of the ordinary, everyday words and phrases in most of the final text are correct. But culturally specific words concerning the nomadic culture or words connected with the ethnography of communication and established idiomatic phrases are explained insufficiently.

For example: the names of animals and plants are only generally described, there is no exact designation (e.g. *tenggis* 'sea' is glossed as a 'designation of water', *qablan* (leopard) as a 'name of an animal', *südün cicigina* (goosegrass, *Potentilla anserina*) as 'designations of the roots of plants', *soqosun* (perch), *jebüge* (endemic type of trout) and *qadara* (grayling, *Salmo thymallus*) as 'names of fish', *quladu* (buzzard) as a 'name of a bird', *keyibür sum* (lit., 'Wind Arrow', i.e. 'arrow fast as the wind') as a 'name of an arrow' (Čeringsodnam 1990, p. 20) and the like.

18) Poucha (1955, p. 226): '..., nechť se jim uloží pokuta na majetku jako za useknutí nosu!'

In the Ming interlinear Glossary there are up to about forty words without any translation or explanation; there is an empty space next to them. From among these forty words we may randomly mention three: *qatar mawui* (filthy dead body), *qunar mawu* (filthy), *qokir mawu* (filthy skeleton). These were not obsolete expressions; in their time these were humiliating invectives in everyday use in common language. In present-day colloquial Mongolian there are dozens of similar words. Of course, the educated people and translators, who had already grown up in the Chinese cultural milieu, were not used to hearing such expressions.

Chinese professor Čeng Yüan, who studied the Ming interlinear Glossary of the SHM, wrote: "The translator used to live for a long time within the country of China, he could not manage to translate obsolete Mongolian words." (Čeringsodnam 1990, p. 21). This opinion of Čeng Yüan does not only concern the 40 uncommented words, but concerns all the hundreds of errors and shortcomings. The Mongolian translators and learned men were born and grew up on Chinese territory and though they reached a high level of education, they lost contact with their original nomadic traditions. That is why they translated the culturally specific expressions and important words connected with nomadic culture erroneously or insufficiently.

The nomadic life and aggressive campaigns of Chingis Khan and of his descendants, are completely linked with the horse, cavalry and knowledge of horses. But the passages concerning horses in the interlinear translation provoke the suspicion that the authors did not understand horses and that they had never even sat on a horse. And there are many examples of strange translations into European languages, which ultimately originated from the incorrect Ming interlinear glosses.

3. Some typical textual examples

Let us consider some of the conspicuous examples based on the erroneous interpretation of the SHM in the Chinese transcriptions.

3.1. HOW THE BEST OF ALL HORSES CALLED "PENETRATING LIKE A SHOT" TURNED INTO AN ORDINARY "WHITE HORSE WITH A BLACK BACK"

In the SHM text we find a name of a horse ***oroq-singqula***, which was derived by a nominal suffix from the verbs ***oro-***, ***singqu-*** (§24, §90, §106, §193). It

means lit., 'to penetrate and shoot'. The name refers to a horse quickly and fearlessly pouncing into attack against enemies in battle or against game in hunting. It is an experienced horse, which trots quickly with its neck tight forward, is steadfast and does not retreat from anything. In the SHM the name of such a high-quality horse reflected its unique ability and it was highly valued especially by warriors.

In the Ming interlinear Glossary the word *oroq* was explained by translators as a 'black stripe on the horse's back'[19] and the word *singqula* as 'white horse'.[20]

European translations:[21]

Russian translation:	*белоспинный вороный Орох-Шинхул* (Kozin, 1941, p. 94)
Czech translation:	*a white horse with a black stripe*[22]
English translations:	*grayish white horse with and black stripe along the backbone* (Cleaves 1982, p. 5)
	white horse with a black sore (Rachewiltz 2006, p. 5)
French translation:	*un cheval blanc à crins noirs qui avait la queue pelée et une plaie au dos* (Even, Pop 1994, p. 44)

This is because in Mongolian there is also an expression *oroq* for the particular colour of some breeds as well as some wild animals and the word *oroq* is explained in the dictionary "Twentyone" from the year 1717 in these words: 'designation of colour similar to the colour of wild boar' (p. 114). This colour occasionally occurs with goats or cows. It hardly ever appears with horses. In the basic dictionary of the Manju Empire, the so-called 'Dictionary of five languages' from the 18th century, in the section on the colours of horses, this colour does not appear among the 32 mentioned colours (cf. pp. 4339–4349). And even if a horse of such a colour still existed, for Mongols this is not a pleasant colour and they would never present such a horse to anybody and it is certain that a respectable person would not ride it, as happened in the SHM. According to the SHM text, when Temüjin (the future Chingis Khan) was pursuing his eight good horses, which were stolen by bandits, he met a young man *Boorča*, who helped him very much. Without hesitation he joined Temüjin and immediately replaced his tired and bad horse by the horse *Oroq-singqula* (§90). Obviously, if they were pursuing bandits in

19) Haenisch (1962, p. 127): 'schwarzer Rückenstreif des Pferdes'.
20) Haenisch (1962, p. 141): 'weißes Pferd, Schimmel'.
21) Kozin did not trust the Ming interlinear translation and accepted the Mongolian name of the horse *Орок-шинхула* without translating it.
22) Poucha (1955, p. 14): 'bělouš s černým pruhem'.

a life-or-death conflict, they needed capable horses – at that moment colour was not important for them. However, the Ming translator mistakenly replaced the expression describing the quality of the horse by a term of aesthetic appearance – and in the translations from the Chinese glosses into European languages, including the one by Poucha into Czech, this ultimately resulted in a 'white horse with a black stripe'.

In a different place, e.g. in the 'lightning attack' of the allies to suppress the Merkits, Jamuqa formulates his readiness to fight in poetic images. Among other things he says: "On my Purebred Quick One (the quickest of all) did I mount, on my Penetrating Quick One did I mount" (*Qara Qurdun-iyan unuba bi, Oroq Qurdun-iyan unuba bi,* §106). However, in the Ming Glossary this is again incorrectly translated: 'quick horse of black colour, quick horse with black stripe on its back'.[23] And this shift was accepted also by the European translations. Here the word *Qara* is a part of the name Quick One and it means 'purebred, by its origin, definitely' quick. The word *Oroq* is also a part of the name, derived from the basic meaning 'penetrating'. Jamuqa certainly was not a man, who would care above all about the colour of his horse.

In §193 of the SHM there is mention that an enemy took hold of one *singyulyan* (lit., 'penetrating', i.e. courageously attacking) horse from the front line of attack of Chingis Khan's cavalry. It could not have been an ordinary white horse. It must have been an able horse, one that was courageous under attack. All of the horses from the first lines of this cavalry, commanded by famous commanders *Jebe and Qubilai,* must have been those 'penetrating and courageous' horses, which may figuratively be compared with the modern fighter squadrons of the present-day airforce.

3.2. HOW AN EXCELLENT AND ABLE HORSE CALLED "QUICK LOOP" BECAME AN ORDINARY "QUICK YELLOW HORSE"

In the SHM text the name of this horse is recorded as ***qurdun qubi*** (§90). The word *qubi* has another possible graphic variant *quyiba,*[24] which means loop of the lasso (*ury-a*) used to catch horses. In this case it is a metaphorical name 'Driving and catching other horses' – i.e. figuratively a 'Loop for other hors-

23) Cf. Cleaves (1982, p. 42): 'I have gat me up upon my courser with a black stripe along the backbone.'
24) Cf. Lessing 1960: *xuiba* (p. 982) and *xubi* 3 (p. 977) 'leather loop of an *ury-a*'. The latter is 'a long pole with a loop on the end used to catch horses' (Lessing, s.v.).

es'! Nowadays Mongolian cowboys call such horses the same thing – *уургӑч морь* (horse with an *ury-a*, a 'looper' horse). Such a horse is quick and can catch up with fleeing horses. In addition to that, at the moment when the loop is thrown over the head of the chased horse, the 'loop-horse' can stop running on all four legs immediately and resist the speed of the caught horse. In this manner it effectively helps its rider to stop and manipulate the caught animal. In the SHM text *Qurdun qubi* was exactly such an excellent horse. It is also clear from the context that *Boorču,* when running with Temüjin after the robbers, needed exactly such a good and experienced animal to be able to drive back the stolen horses. What role could the colour of the horse's hair have played?

However, in the Ming Glossary the word *qubi* is translated as "white-brown",[25] while in the European translations there is a wide variety of translations:

Russian translation: *буланный бегунец* (Козин 1941, p. 94)
Czech translation: *quick fair-haired* ('rychlý plavák'; Poucha 1955, p. 36)
English translation: *a swift dun* (Cleaves 1982, p. 30)
French translation: *un fauve rapide* (Even, Pop 1994, p. 65)

In some English translations the horse is even turned into a yellow mare "a fast dun mare" (Rachewiltz 2006, p. 27) – which for every Mongol, let alone a nomadic warrior, is a particularly strange idea, because for riding, and especially for fighting or catching horses, only castrated males (stallions) are used.

3.3. HOW A CASTRATED FAIR-HAIRED HORSE TURNED INTO A FAIR-HAIRED MARE

In the SHM text, the name of the horse ***esgel qali'un*** (§117), lit., 'cut yellow horse', has a metaphorical meaning 'castrated yellow horse'. In the Ming Glossary the word *esgel* is translated as 'a mare not giving birth for several years, a mare infertile for several successive years'.[26] The word *qali'un* is translated as 'brown horse with black mane and tail'.[27] In European translations there follows a similar text:

25) Cf. Haenisch (1962, p. 69): 'hellbraunes Pferd'.
26) Cf. Haenisch (1962, p. 46): 'eine Stute, die mehrere Jahre nicht gefohlt hat'.
27) Cf. Haenisch (1962, p. 58): 'braunes Pferd mit schwarzer Mähne und Schwanz'.

Russian translation: *кобылица по прозвищу Эсхель-халиун* (Выдра) – (Козин 1941, p. 106)
Czech translation: *a mare with black mane and tail, which had not had colts for several years*[28]
English translations: *yellowish white [mare] with black tail and mane* (Cleaves 1982, p. 49)
yellowish white mare with black tail and mane (Rachewiltz 2006, p. 45)
French translation: *la Louvette-à-crins-noirs* (Even, Pop 1994, p. 83)

The word *esgel* in northern dialects of mediaeval Mongolian, in which the SHM was written, meant 'castrated'. In the Southern dialect, in which the Ming Glossary was written, this word meant 'a mare which is no longer fertile'. And thus in the interpretation of the Chinese Emperor's committee, after subjugating the Merkits, instead of a horse of excellent properties, Temüjin seized only a mare of their ruler. And he even presented it to his brotherly friend Jamuqa! Should any Mongol have read this translation, he would have been rather perplexed and he would have even viewed it with considerable resentment as an offence. Neither Khans nor noyons, brave warriors, nor ordinary soldiers ride mares – they have plenty of horses. And in addition to that, mares are not able to make long-distance campaigns (they would miscarry their colts). Mares are only occasionally ridden by women over a short distance, but during the Naadam games or on festive occasions not even women ride them.

3.4. HOW ONE OF CHINGIS KHAN'S GUARDING KNIGHTS USED TO RIDE ON A HUNCHBACKED HORSE

The SHM (§95) narrates how young Temüjin started to assemble his loyal cavalcade. First of all he sent his younger stepbrother Belgütei to fetch Boorču. Boorču mounted his chestnut horse with withers, and without telling his Father, threw his grey felt quilt over the saddle and arrived with Belgütei. In this way they became friends.

The original had to mention the name of the horse ***bögötür qongqor*** (Chestnut with withers; §95). The word *bögötür* implies *bögötürge* (withers – the first vertebra of the back). But in colloquial pronunciation the word was shortened to *bögötür* and this resulted in homonyms with different meanings: the withers of the back, but also hunchbacked or a back curved upwards as a form of defect. The Ming translator chose that incorrect meaning 'upwards bulging back'[29] and that was also followed by the other translations. There is practically no horse with such a back. And should there be one like that, it would

28) Poucha (1955, p. 54): 'kobyla s černou hřívou a ocasem, která neměla po několik let hříbata'.
29) Cf. Haenish (1962, p. 16): 'mit (nach oben) krummen Rücken'.

soon die due to disabled bones. The meaning of the word *bögötür*, viz 'the withers' – is mentioned in many popular sūtras on the qualities of horses and it is precisely a 'protruding first vertebra of the back' that is considered to be a sign of a high-quality horse. *Boǒrču* was the son of a famous wealthy man, and it is only natural that from his herd of horses he would select the horse which was best of all.

Translations into European languages except French:[30]

Russian translation: *горбатый саврас* (Козин 1941, p. 95)
Czech translation: *brown horse with a bulging back*[31]
English translations: *strawyellow [horse] with a curved back* (Cleaves 1982, p. 32)
chestnut horse with a hunched back (Onon 1993, p. 24)
chestnut horse with the arched back (Rachewiltz 2006, p. 29)

Were we to translate these texts back into Mongolian, we would obtain very humiliating expressions about horses. Or a translation that the Lord Bodončar galloped on a horse with a (moulting) tail without hair ('with a hairless tail' – Cleaves, Rachewiltz, §24) would be very unpleasant for nomads, because a horse with a hairless tail is not usual. Such strange translations can originate from the Chinese interlinear translation.

3.5. CAN WE TRUST THE INFORMATION THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE TO LIVE AT THE SOURCE OF THE RIVER ONON?

In the SHM text there is a phrase ***Onan-müren-nü teriġün-e nutuyla-*** (§1), which means 'to settle at the upper reaches of the river Onon'. Metaphorically the word *teriġün*, lit., 'head', means the 'upper reaches'. The personification of mountains and rivers occupies an important place in nomadic metaphorical thought. Both mountains and rivers have their heads, trunks, waists and feet.

But in the Ming Glossary the expression *teriġün* is explained as 'source, beginning of the river'.[32] The phrase *Onan-müren-nü teriġün-e nutuylaju* is translated into Chinese as 'to settle at the source of the river called Onon' (Cend Gün 1997, p. 53).

30) Let us note that the French translation is exact and poetic (Even, Pop 1994, p. 67): 'Il enfourcha un alezan doré au garrot renflé.'
31) Poucha (1955, p. 38): 'hnědák s vypouklým hřbetem.'
32) Cf. Haenish (1962, p. 149): 'Quelle.'

European translations:

Russian translation: *Кочевали у истоков Онан-реки* (Kozin 1941, p. 79)
Czech translation: *they chose their nomadizing region, a place at the source of the river* Onan'[33]
English translations: *they had encamped at the head of the Onan River* (Cleaves 1982, p. 1)
they had settled at the source of the Onan River (Rachewiltz 2006, p. 1)
French translation: *Ils parvinrent aux sources de la rivière Onan* (Even, Pop 1994, p. 41)

The source of the river Onon is to be found at the mountain Burqan Qaldun, in a place where there are impenetrable belts of taiga all around within dozens of kilometres. Neither people nor cattle can normally live there.

In the SHM the place, where Chingis Khan was born and from where his ancestors came, is called *Onan-müren-nü teriġün*. In my opinion, this region is a great territory at a distance of approximately 120–150 km down the river from the source of the river Onon. That is where Chingis Khan's ancestors settled and where the future Khan was also born in a place called Deli'ün Boldaq. That is why it is not possible to translate Chingis Khan's decree, which prohibits settling at his birth place, as a prohibition of dwelling at the source of three rivers: e.g. 'No one should camp at the source of three rivers, whoever it may be.'[34] (*Ǧurban müred-ün teriġün ken-e ber bu bayulludqun*; §179).

3.6. HOW ONE URIANGQAI ROASTED DEER ENTRAILS

In the SHM translations we find an episode about an Uriangqai man, who killed a three-year-old deer and roasted its 'ribs and entrails' on a spit. But for Kozin, all European translations accept this interpretation of the passage. However, it is not very probable that a hunter would roast particularly the entrails of his kill on an open fire. The Mongolian original says: ***qabirqas inu abit inu siraju*** (§12). Here the word *qabirqas* means 'long ribs' and the word *abit* refers to the 'first four short ribs'. That man was preparing two roasted pieces – the long ribs for himself and as a habit, the short fibs for the fire, as an offering. However, in the Ming Glossary the word *abit* was translated as 'entrails, intestines'.[35] In the northern dialect of the author of the SHM, the word *abit* is a designation of the short ribs, but in the Southern dialects,

33) Poucha (1955, p. 11): 'zvolili si kočoviště, místo u pramene řeky Onanu.'
34) Poucha (1955, p. 111): 'U pramene tří řek ať nikdo netáboří, ať je to kdokoliv.' Cf. also Cleaves (1982, p. 109): 'Suffer ye not to be pitched by any one at the head of the Three Rivers.'
35) Cf. Haenisch (1962, p. 2): 'Eingeweide, Kaldaunen.'

which the Ming translator could understand, it probably meant the 'entrails, intestines'. For example in the Ordos Southern dialect there is now the word *abit* designating the colon or large intestine. Translators into European languages trusted the Ming translation.

Czech translation: *he roasted its ribs and entrails on the spit*[36]
English translations: *was roasting his ribs and inwards* (Cleaves 1982, p. 3)
was roasting ist ribs and entrails (Rachewiltz 2006, p. 3)
French translation: *et en faisait rôtir les côtes et les viscères* (Even, Pop 1994, p. 42)

There is hardly anybody who would believe that someone would roast uncleaned intestines on an open fire. The Mongolian translator Cend-gün knew very well that uncleaned intestines are not roasted, that is why he refused the Chinese interline translation and replaced it with a different word *coroi* (belly). P. Pelliot wrote that for nomads it was common to roast entrails. But Mostaert (2010, p. 178) disagreed and wrote: 'the word *abid* (Chinese *tou tsang*) is not an expression only for the small and large intestines, but also for the internal organs: kidneys, liver, spleen, and all can be roasted'.[37]

It was only in Russian that S. Kozin (1941, p. 82) expressed the meaning correctly:

В лесу ему повстречался какой-то Урянхаец, который, зарезав трехлетку-оленя, готовил жаркое из его ребер, из верхних коротких ребер.

3.7. HOW RAW MEAT TURNED TO DRIED MEAT

Nomads have an interesting manner of preserving raw meat till the end of the third spring month (March). It is a routine matter. Raw meat is stuffed into a wooden vessel or cattle rumen and is deposited frozen into a dark and cool hole, where it is covered by ice and old and superfluous blankets. At the end of the third spring month this half-frozen meat is taken out and is still almost fresh. Present-day Mongols call such meat *үүц* – 'preserved' meat.[38] In the SHM this preserved meat is called *köngsilemel* (§19). This word also exists in Khalkha Mongolian nowadays (*хүнсэлмэл*) and it has a similar meaning: *long-life* (about victuals in general). The whole phrase ***qabur niken üdür köngsilemel qonin cinaju*** (§19), if read in modern pronunciation, would be understood by present-day Mongols as 'frozen meat', not as dried meat.

Only Haenisch (1962, p. 104) translated this expression partly correctly as 'a sheep from the last winter month'.[39] In another context (Haenisch 1948, p. 3) he translates: 'she boiled a lamb from the last year.'[40] However, this translation is not correct, because it could not have been a lamb.

But this is what we can see in other translations:

Russian translation: *сварила дожелта провяленного впрок барана* (Козин 1941, p. 80)
English translation: *while boiling the dried [flesh of] a sheep* (Cleaves 1982, p. 4)
French translation: *elle faisait cuire de la viande de mouton séchée* (Even, Pop 1994, p. 43)
Czech translation: *she boiled a lamb dried in the air*[41]

All other translators and scholars explain the expression in the same way as 'dried meat', 'meat dried by smoking and other methods'. This in fact first of all reveals an incorrect knowledge of ethnographic life and customs. Note also that the Chinese sign used in the translation of the word *köngsilemel* in the Ming Gloss (Čeringsodnam 1990, p. 281) refers in Chinese to meat 'conserved by adding salt and stuffing'. This does not correspond to the Mongolian reality either. A Chinese reader would certainly not understand this sign as 'dried' meat.

Thus in the SHM the ancestress of the Mongols *Alan-qo'a* on one spring day finally cooked the frozen meat taken out from the ground hole for her five sons and started to talk with them about a very serious topic. When the long spring days start, the children of Mongolian herdsmen to this day impatiently wait for the moment when the frozen meat is produced, whose calories give a great stimulus after the prolonged hard winter. And that was also what the ancestress made psychological use of.

3.8. HOW AN ORDER OF THE KHAN TURNED INTO A PIECE OF ADVICE

Mongolian Khan Ambayai (Chingis Khan's ancestor from the third generation) was on the way to give his daughter in marriage in the Tatar region, but

36) Poucha (1955, p. 12): 'pekl jeho hrudí a vnitřnosti na rožni.'
37) These entrails can be roasted, everything can be roasted, but nomads did not and still do not have such habits.
38) For *үүц* cf. Hangin (1986, s.v.): 'animals slaughtered during winter and preserved for use in spring'.
39) 'ein Schaf vom letzten Wintermonat'.
40) 'kochte sie ein vorjähriges Lamm.'
41) Poucha (1955, p. 13): 'uvařila jehně na vzduchu sušené.'

on the way he was captured by treacherous border Tatars and taken to the Jurchen Khan Altan as an enemy. Before being murdered Ambakhai Khan sent a messenger to the Mongols with a message: 'Let me be the last Khan of the whole state who accompanied his daughter!' (***nama-'ar kesetkün***, §53). It was not an ordinary message, but an order. The early lost verb root *kes-* meant 'to stop, finish, cease'.[42] This firm order then became an unwritten law for Mongolian people for many centuries to come. In the SHM it is said that when Temüjin was bringing his bride, her father merely said goodbye to her, after which she was accompanied only by her mother (§94). In folklore this habit is reflected in the proverb 'Father will visit the bride later, but she is only accompanied by her mother' (*эцэг эргэлтэнд, эх хүргэлтэнд*).

But in the translations of the SHM a different meaning is presented:

Russian translation: *Отомстите за меня, который самолично проважал свою дочь, как всенародный каган и государь народа.* (Козин 1941, p. 84)

German translation: *Me, the ruler of all and the prince of the stage, when I took my daughter myself on the way – take me as a warning example! – I was captured by the Tatar people…*[43]

Czech translation: *Me, the Khagan of all, the lord of the people, was captured by the Tatar people when accompanying my daughter. Let this be a warning to you.*[44]

English translations: *Beware, [instructed] by [what hat befallen] me, of yourself accompanying your daughter, when ye will be qahan of all and [33v] Lord of the Nation. I have been seized by the Tatar people.* (Cleaves 1982, p. 11)

…., learn from my example and beware of taking your daughter in person to her betrothed. I have been seized by the Tatars. (Rachewiltz, 2006, p. 11)

French translation: *…, gardez-vous bien, instruits par mon exemple de conduire en personne votre fille. J'ai été, moi, capturé par les Tatar* (Even, Pop 1994, p. 48)

These translations are based on Chinese renderings of *nama-'ar kesetkün*. The word *kesetkün* was interpreted as derived from *kesegü* – 'to warn'.[45] According to the Chinese abridged translation the phrase *nama-'ar kesetkün* was interpreted as 'make a warning from me'.[46]

42) Lessing (1960, p. 459) s.v. *kes* gives the meaning of the adverb *kes* 'abruptly, in a decisive manner suddenly; off', and remarks that with verbs it had the meanging of 'breaking or tearing'.

43) Haenisch (1948, p. 7): 'Ich, der Herrscher über alle und der Fürst des Staates, bin, als ich meine Tochter selbst auf den Weg brachte – nehmet ein warnendes Beispiel an mir! – von dem Tatar-Volk gefangen worden.'

44) Poucha (1955, p. 19): Já, chahan všech, pán lidu, byl jsem zajat lidem Tatarů, když jsem provázel svou dceru. Budiž vám to odstrašujícím příkladem.

45) Haenisch (1962, p. 99): 'warnen.'

46) Haenisch (1962, p. 99): 'machet aus mir eine Warnung!'

However, the translators did not only translate incorrectly the expressions *nama-'ar kesedkün*, but the whole sentence.

3.9. HOW ANCIENT MONGOLS DANCED

After Ambaγai the Mongols elected Qutul as their Khan. On that occasion they assembled round the Shaman tree Qorqonaq and ***qabirqa-ta qa'ulqa, ebüdük-te ölkeg boltala*** (§57) – danced so long 'that their ribs showed through their skin and their knees turned into cartilage'. We can understand that they danced very long until they were completely exhausted. Metaphorically and with exaggeration their exhaustion reached the point of almost dying, their bodies became only bone and skin. It was a common expression in the poetic language of that time. In the translations, however, it is erroneously rendered:

Russian translation: *… плясали вокруг развесистого дерева на Хорхонахе. До того допляcались, что, как говорится, «выбоины образовались по бедро, а кучи пыли – по колено.* (Kozin 1941, p. 85)

German translation: *…, they danced around the thickly growing trees at Chorchonach, until they were in pits up to their hips and stood in the dust up to their knees.*[47]

Czech translation: *They danced around furcated trees of Chorchonach, until they were in a pit up to their hips and in dust up to their knees.*[48]

English translation: *they danced round about the Branching Tree of Qorqonaγ [Valley], until there was a ditch up to [their] ribs; [until there was] dust up to [their] knees.* (Cleaves 1982, p. 14)

The French translation is not completely exact, but rather close:

…ils firent la ronde autour de l'arbre-Touffu de Qorqonaq, et ils dansèrent
À s'en rompre les côtes,
À s'en déboîter les genoux. (Even, Pop 1994, p. 50)

All that is because in the Ming Glossary the word *qa'ulqa* is translated by the meaning of a homonym 'deep trodden road, way,'[49] not as a 'thin layer of skin'. The word *ölkeg* was then probably again translated by a homonym: 'dust, ashes',[50] instead of the meaning 'cartilage'.

47) Haenisch (1948, p. 9): '…, tanzten sie um die dichtbewaldeten Bäume bei Chorchonach, bis sie zu den Hüften in Graben und zu den Knien im Staube standen.'

48) Poucha (1955, p. 21): Tančili kolem rozvětvených stromů Chorchonachu, až byli po boky v jámě a po kolena v prachu.

49) Haenisch (1962, p. 64): 'tief getretener Weg'.

50) Haenisch (1962, p. 123): 'Asche, Staub'.

3.10. DID THE MONGOLIAN KHAN KILL PEOPLE BY BOILING THEM ALIVE IN A KETTLE?

At the time, when Temüjin was declared Chingis Khan, an absolute ruler of all Mongols, Jamuqa, the ruler of Southern Mongols, collected 30,000 soldiers and launched an attack against Chingis Khan. The latter also collected 30,000 soldiers and they clashed at the place called Dalan-Baljud (1190). Chingis Khan was defeated and forced to retreat. This is mentioned in the SHM in §129: "There Chinggis-chahan was defeated by Jamuqa and retreated to the Jerene pass on the Onan. Jamuqa said: 'We have driven him to Jerene on the Onan,' and on returning he had the Činos princes boiled in seventy kettles. He had Neüdei's and Čaγa'an U'a's heads cut off and bound to a horse's tail, and he drew them behind him."[51]

However, ***Dalan toqo'o*** (Seventy kettles) is in fact a local place name. Mongolian numerals *jiran* (60), *dalan* (70) occur in local toponyms very often and describe an unspecific number, only referring to a great quantity. To this day *Жаран могоо* (Sixty Kettles) is a name of a steppe in Eastern Mongolia. The word *mogoo* 'kettle' is used to designate a valley or a place with many hollows. The word *bucalqaju*, lit., 'to boil', is a distortion of the original word *busangqaju*, which means 'to destroy, crush, defeat'. At many places in the SHM the defeat of an enemy state or tribe is described by the same set expression formed by the name of the tribe or state in the Accusative *-i /yi* and the verb *busangqa-* 'to destroy, crush' and the like, e.g.:

Merkit irgen-i busangqaju (§113), i.e. 'to crush the Merkit people'
Naiman Merkit busangqaqdaba (§208), i.e. 'the Naimans and Merkits were destroyed'
Merkit Naiman-i busangqui so'or-tur (§208) 'at the time of destruction of the Merkits and Naimans'

That is why the original text must have had the phrase *činos-un kö'üd-i dalan-toqo'ot busangqaju* – a much more sober statement: 'the Činos princes were destroyed at the place of Many Hollows'.

51) Poucha (1955, p. 66): Činggis-chahan byl tam Džamuchou poražen a ustoupil k soutěsce Džerene na Onanu. Džamucha pravil: „Zahnali jsme ho do Džerene na Onanu," a dal při svém návratu činoské prince uvařit v sedmdesáti kotlích. Hlavu Neüdejovu a Čachaan-Uvovu dal uříznout a uvázat na koňský ocas a vlekl je za sebou.
Cf. also Cleaves (1982, p. 60): When Jamuγa spake, he said, "We have made [him] to flee for refuge unto Jerene of the Onon," and, when he returned, [5r] making the princes of the Činos to be boiled [in] seventy kettles and cutting off the head of Neüdei Čaγa'an U'a, he dragged [it] away at the tail of [his] horse.

In the Mongolian script, the letters ***ng*** in the medial position in the word *Busangqaju* are written by a circle bulging to the right. Its initial part in the original SHM text must have faded with time and the shape of the letter resembled that of the letter **-l**. The transliterators obviously 'saw' the word *busalqaju, which* means 'to boil'. And it was in this way that the erroneous transcription was kept in further copies and this was also reflected in the Chinese transcription of the SHM and in the historical chronicle Altan tobči of Lubsan Danzan. In the Ming Glossary the words are translated as follows: *dalan* 'seventy' ('siebenzig'; Haenisch 1962, p. 31), *toqo'o* 'kettle' ('Kessel'; Haenisch 1962, p. 150) and the word *bučalqaju* 'to boil' ('/auf/kochen lassen'; Haenisch 1962, p. 20). This is then reflected in the translations:

Russian translation:	*приказал сварить в семидесяти котлах* (Kozin 1941, p. 112)
Czech translation:	*had ... the Činos princes boiled in seventy kettles.*[52]
English translations:	*...making the princes of the Činos to be boiled [in] seventy kettles...* (Cleaves 1982, p. 60)
	... had the princes of the Činos boiled alive in seventy cauldrons. (Rachewiltz 2006, p. 54)
French translation:	*... il fit ébouillanter les princes des Loups dans soixante dix chaudrons.* (Even, Pop 1994, p. 94)

4. Conclusion

The Ming Interlinear Glossary of the SHM was arranged in such a way that at the right side of every Mongolian word the relevant colloquial Chinese word was written. With every proper name it is specified whether it is a name of a person, family lineage, tribe, place, river, lake or mountain etc. In the text that came down to us, every Mongolian word preserves its grammatical form, and the word is translated up to the last suffix. It was obviously a teaching material for the purpose of learning colloquial Mongolian and its aim was not to preserve it as a literary artistic work.

Western scholars designated the Ming Glossary in three ways: 'interlinear Chinese Glosses', 'interlinear Chinese translation' and 'interlinear Chinese version'.

Cf.
Haenisch (1931): Interlinearversion (p. 5), Interlineartext (p. 56), die chinesische Interlinearversion (p. 58)
Cleaves (1982): interlinear Chinese glosses (p. xxiv)

52) Poucha (1955, p. 66): 'dal ....činoské prince uvařit v sedmdesáti kotlích.'

Rachewiltz: interlinear glosses (p. xlvii), interlinear translation (p. 227), interlinear version (p. 269); the Chinese version (p. 415); the interlinear Chinese version (p. 417), the Chinese interlinear version (p. 426)
Even, Pop (1994): les gloses interlinéaires en chinois (p. 15)
Kozin (1941): подстрочный китайский перевод (p. 12), подстрочный монголо-китайский словарь (p. 17)
Čeringsodnam: kitad qadmal (хятад хадмал, Čeringsodnam, 1990)

Haenisch (1931, p. 56) wrote that for the Chinese reader the interlinear Chinese translation is completely incomprehensible.[53] Obviously he had in mind not the comprehensibility of individual words, but the fact that according to these incoherent translations or explanations it not possible to have an idea of the SHM text proper. In that case it is not possible to agree with the designation 'interlinear Chinese translation' and the designation 'Chinese version' does not make much sense either.

The SHM (or its phonetic transcription into Chinese signs) was discovered in Peking by the missionary Palladij Kafarov. Thanks to him the text attracted the attention of many European scholars, who startet to translate it into their own languages and to write extensive research works about it. All of them were first of all Sinologists. They considered the Ming Glossary of the SHM as one of the versions of the chronicle itself, and that is why they also called it "interlinear Chinese version" (*die chinesische Interlinearversion* – E. Haenisch 1931, p. 58). This idea has continued to prevail in the minds of many to this day. However, it follows from the above discussion that considering the Ming Glossary to represent a Chinese version of the SHM is incorrect. It is contradicted by the inaccuracy and purpose-oriented translation of the individual words with no respect for the context, and by the general disregard of the life and institutions as well as of the literary style of the SHM. The aim of the Glossary was different – it should have served a didactic purpose, not a literary or historiographical purpose.

It was already E. Haenisch (1931, p. 60) who voiced the following criticism: '...also specialists, historians, do not make the effort to study themselves the relevant colonial languages, to read the indigenous sources and to approach the historical research only with a substantial factual preliminary knowledge, but they believed themselves to be able to manage everything on the basis of education in Chinese literature.'[54]

53) "Dieser Interlineartext, von dem wir im folgenden ein Muster bringen, ist dem chinesischen Leser von vornherein unverständlich."
54) "... auch die Fachleute, die Historiker, sich nicht die Mühe nehmen, die einschlägigen Kolonialsprachen selbst zu studieren, die einheimischen Quellen zu lesen und erst mit gründlicher philologischer und sachlicher Vorkenntnis an die Geschichtsforschung heranzutreten, sondern alles durch chinesische literarische Bildung allein glaubten meistern zu können..."

Some scholars, for example Mongolian scholar D. Čeringsodnam (1990, p. 19), appreciate the interlinear Chinese Glossary very much and think that it is absolutely important for a correct understanding of each and every Mongolian word in the text. If we do not approach the Glossary with a sufficient critical distance, it can lead us into making erroneous translations. Why should we stick to the errors, which blindly follow the words of the teacher: "If a word has an interlinear translation, in principle it is necessary to trust the transcribers, it is not possible to disregard their translations."[55]

The word *sarqud* (Kh. *сархад*) in the SHM (§70), which means 'wine', is obviously erroneously interpreted in the Ming interlinear translation as 'sacrificial meat'. And Mostaert (2010, p. 17) noticed that in modern language the word *sarqud* means 'wine' and he wrote: 'very many words in the middle period of the Mongolian language had meanings different from modern colloquial and written language, and in my opinion the interlinear translation is better (sacrificial meat).'[56] Such a high appreciation of the Ming interlinear translation as against the Mongolian original is reflected in the English translation of Cleaves – *meat offered* (Cleaves 1982, p. 19).

The European translators and scholars relied on the Chinese interlinear translation with great confidence, and that is why they evidently disregarded the work of those scholars, who approached the Ming Interlinear translation critically and tried to correct the errors in translations and even to correct the transcription. For example the expression *nu'un kögüd manu nutuy qarayu* (§65) was explained correctly and precisely translated by many translators (Kozin, Damdinsüren, Gaadamba, Ozava, Even & Pop), without following the interlinear translation. But still, the prominent scholar and translator Rachewiltz does not accept their interpretations and superficially praises Mostaert[57] and translates the word *nutuq* into English as *nomadic camp*. And still we have the Mongolian original with an unequivocally correct and easy

55) Mostaert (2010, p. xvii): "Аль нэг үг хадмал орчуулгатай байх юм бол зарчмын хувьд галиглагчдад итгэх л хэрэгтэй, ноцтой шалтгаангүйгээр тэдний хөрвүүлгийг тоохгүй байж үл болно."
56) "маш олон үг дундад үеийн монгол хэлэнд одоогийн яриа ба монгол бичгийн хэлнийхээс өөр утгатай байсан, миний хувьд хадмал орчуулгыг (өргөлийн мах) илүүд үзэж байна."
57) Rachewiltz (2006, p. 333): "Mostaert's interpretation is supported by the Chinese sectional summary, and it may be assumed that Ming editors had on the whole a better understanding of the text from the folkloristic point of view than we have now."

meaning. Why do we not stick to the generally accepted tradition of translating significant literary works into foreign languages from the original and not from secondary translations, as happens in the case of our translators, who have accepted without reservations the erroneous translations of Ming editors?

In the end we should again underline the fact that the Ming interlinear translation and the Chinese abridged translation are not the language of the original SHM, but an auxiliary comparative material.

It is therefore important to translate the SHM first of all from the original Mongolian language. In order to make this possible, it is necessary not only to understand the old and mediaeval Mongolian language, but also the manner of thought of the ancient nomads and the manner of their communication.

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